

STATE OF COLORADO

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COLLEGE AID TO HURRICANE KATRINA VICTIMS

Higher Education Announces Scholarships and Late Admissions

Rick O'Donnell, executive director of the Colorado Department of Higher Education, announced today that his agency is setting aside \$750,000 to provide financial assistance to college students from Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi affected by Hurricane Katrina and who have relocated to Colorado.

"We need to try to bring back a sense of normalcy to those displaced by Hurricane Katrina. It is a small, but important symbol on Colorado's part to help evacuees continue their education. There are already a number of evacuees staying at Lowry who want to enroll in the Community College of Aurora but have lost the means or ability to pay their tuition. We want to make sure they can still go to college this semester," said O'Donnell. "We will assist with their tuition and fees as their families get back on their feet

Additionally, the Commission on Higher Education is requesting that Colorado's institutions direct financial aid resources to those students already enrolled in Colorado schools from the affected areas. A number of Colorado colleges and universities are already allowing late admission for Colorado residents whose colleges and universities along the Gulf Coast are now closed due to the hurricane. To assist with this effort and help students find schools with open enrollment slots, the Department announced a toll free phone number students from Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi may call to be referred to Colorado colleges and universities with availability. The Department will work with Colorado's institutions to determine which students need the financial assistance and the reimbursement procedures for that assistance.

"We have the capacity to enroll students whose colleges are now closed and will not open any time soon," said O'Donnell. "To keep them in school we will try to find placement for them here in Colorado."

CollegeInvest, an agency in the Department of Higher Education, will provide the \$750,000 in funding from revenues generated from interest earned on student loan investments and other student loan business activities. Students seeking this tuition assistance – or students from the hurricane area seeking admission in a Colorado school – may call 1-800-777-2757 to get more information.

The Colorado Department of Higher Education coordinates and regulates all 29 public institutions of higher education in the state that cumulatively enroll nearly 270,000 students. It also oversees student loan and college savings operations.

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